

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
November 16, 2010

Budget Committee Members Present

Larry Stuker, Chairman
Mary-Louise Woolsey,, Vice Chairman
Richard Bateman, Selectman Representative
Pat Collins
Dick Hansen
Brian Lapham
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Mark McFarlin
Michael Pierce
Michael Plouffe
Richard Reniere
Peter Traynor

Chairman Stuker called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Stuker introduced the members of the Board.

Chairman Stuker said this meeting would be a work session for the Fire Department budget for 2011.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Chairman Stuker welcomed Chris Silver, Chief, Hampton Fire Department

Chief Silver said a decision regarding contractual obligations between the Town and the Fire Fighters has resulted in an increase in salaries. Line items affected are Regular Wages under Administration, Regular Wages under Communications, and Holiday Pay. This will add \$30,945 bringing the bottom line to \$2,974,413.

Moved by Ms. Woolsey, seconded by Mr. Traynor, to move forward to the public hearing the amount of \$2,974,413 for the Fire Department.

Chief Silver said this budget is an exercise in balancing the needs of the department for physical resources, buildings and personnel. Chief Silver said they have made some significant improvements in the condition of their vehicles. They are about to take delivery of the new pumper. They have been working on the proposals for the two fire station replacements, and have also put a lot of effort into maintaining what they have. The Town is now in negotiations on contracts with the Town.

Mr. Traynor asked why the Career Incentive Wages is a negative number. Chief Silver said it was because of a transfer to the EMS fund.

Mr. McFarlin asked if the new pumper is a lease or purchase. Chief Silver replied that they have purchased it outright.

Mr. Lapham thanked the Chief for the recent Open House at the Fire Station. He then asked about the Overtime Wages under Communications. Chief Silver explained that this is for Fire Alarm Operators. They work shifts of so many weeks at 34 hours, other weeks at 38 hours and 26 weeks at 48 hours. According to the Fair Labor Standards, they must be paid overtime for time worked over 40 hours in a week.

Mr. Pierce said that when Chief Silver was in the position of Deputy Chief part of his salary came out of the EMS fund. He asked if this was now true for the present Deputy Chief. Chief Silver said it was.

Mr. Pierce asked how many months of the year the department is able to use the boat. Chief Silver said 12 months of the year. Mr. Pierce asked about response time. Chief Silver said it was approximately 15 minutes.

Mr. Collins said this was a tight, well done budget.

Mr. Hansen thanked Chief Silver for his excellent presentation.

Ms. Latimer said there was little fluctuation between what Chief Silver requested, the Town Manager's proposal and the Board of Selectmen's proposal and all numbers follow closely with the 2010 budget. She asked if this budget was a "from scratch" budget or if Chief Silver received direction to stay at the default numbers. Chief Silver said he was instructed to use the 2010 budget as a starting point.

Ms. Latimer asked if there were any vacancies in the department. Chief Silver said there were two vacancies at this time and those positions are included in the budget. Ms. Latimer asked what the final cost was for the ambulance. Chief Silver said it was \$168,000.

Mr. Lessard complimented Chief Silver on his presentation.

Mr. Bateman said P/T Fire Fighters is a zero in the budget. He said he felt the department could return to a previously successful experience in this area. Chief Silver said they have looked at the possibility of using P/T Fire Fighters. Mr. Bateman said he would encourage the department to go in that direction.

Ms. Woolsey asked for an explanation for the increase presented tonight by the Chief. Mr. Bateman said it had to do with probationary status.

Ms. Woolsey asked about the line item noting cost of storms. She asked if any money comes back. Chief Silver said yes, some money does come back, but not always the whole amount. Right now it is 75%, with a possible additional 12-1/2%. He said when they anticipate storms they put additional personnel on duty.

Ms. Woolsey asked about hydrants. Chief Silver said the water company was supposed to color code the hydrants to regulation, but they have not done so. The department is now working with them and they are agreeable to color coding the ones the department feels are appropriate. Chief Silver also asked that once the snow starts, if there is a hydrant by your home, it would be much appreciated if the snow around it is cleaned out.

Ms. Woolsey said the EMS revolving fund started out as a special revenue fund and then was changed to a revolving fund. She said her understanding was that the revolving fund was supposed to be a supplement for emergency services. Revenues would pay for supplies, maintenance and wages. This was set up to be a self-funding operation, not to take the place of normal operating expenses.

Ms. Woolsey said we have a brand new ambulance. So we will now have three ambulances, fully equipped, but we are still essentially running only one ambulance. If we are allowing callback revenue to other communities, that is not good. Chief Silver said revenues are generated on number of transports, not responses. Some of the responses don't get paid. Ms. Woolsey said she felt the department was short staffed for the ambulances. She asked if it was necessary to own all three ambulances. Chief Silver said that while they do not staff all three, they do have the capability to do so if needed. If the new fire station buildings are approved, that will help a great deal.

Chief Stuker said he also appreciated the Open House at the Fire Department. It was a great opportunity to meet Fire Department employees.

Chairman Stuker asked for a vote on the main motion.

Vote: 13 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Collins left the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Rolling Stock

Rolling Stock was discussed.

Chairman Stuker thanked Chief Silver for attending the meeting.

Approval of Minutes of November 12, 2010

Moved by Ms. Woolsey, seconded by Mr. Lapham, to approve the Minutes of November 12, 2010.

Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 4 abstentions (Bateman, Collins, McFarlin, Traynor). Motion passed.

The next meeting will be Thursday, December 9, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at which time there will be a Final Review – Town Budget 2011, Revenues.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee Mr. Reniere **moved**, seconded by Mr. Lessard, that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary